

Welcome to the University of Illinois Extension STEM Team Newsletter. Our goal for this newsletter is to provide science and math information and teaching tips that you can use in the classroom.



Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (STEM) QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

First Issue

February 2009

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KIDS, PETS & SCIENCE "KPS CLUB"
Register your kids for an exciting FREE after school program held at Grant Elementary School 1300 N. 34th Avenue Melrose Park, IL

The program is offered once a week from 3:30-5:30pm.
Dates:
Feb. 17, 2009
Feb. 24, 2009
March 31, 2009
April 7, 2009
April 14, 2009
April 24, 2009

For further information contact:
Dr. Oye
aji@illinois.edu

PHYSICAL SCIENCE CORNER- IYA 2009

By: John Van Horn

This year is the International Year of Astronomy in celebration of the 400th anniversary of Galileo's first use of the telescope. This led to the change in our view of the sky from unchanging and eternal to dynamic and fascinatingly complex. Here's one thing that you can do quickly in February to highlight Astronomy to your students.

You may have already had a child ask what's the bright



star outside at dark? If you have here's the answer. If you haven't had any, encourage your students to look.

This is an easy after school activity. Right now there is an extremely brilliant "star" in the western sky as the sky is getting dark. This isn't a star; it is the planet Venus. It is so bright that it cannot be missed (unless it's cloudy!) In fact Venus is the third brightest object in the sky after the sun and moon. Venus will be visible through March and will reach its brightest around Valentine's Day. Interestingly, the

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SCIENCE OF CANDYMAKING - FOR KIDS!

By: Kenya Thomas

On February 7, 2009, students and parents from the West Cook County area participated in the Science of Candy Making – FOR KIDS workshop. During this 2 hour interactive workshop, students became mini Food Scientists, as if they were working in a research and development lab of a major food



company. These young scientists learned that there are special properties of the sucrose molecule which allows it to be manipulated into making various types of candies they enjoy. They were also introduced to the extensive process of how chocolate is made from the

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PI DAY IS COMING! MARCH 14

By: Karen Meyer



Pi Day is a day to celebrate mathematics in your school. Although it falls on a Saturday this year, try to find creative ways to investigate math concepts related to pi. There are lots of sites on the internet with pi day activities. Here are a few to get you started;

www.Teachpi.org

http://www.123greetings.com/events/pi_day/index.html

Send pi day cards to all your students and friends

<http://www.kathimitchell.com/pi.html> - Lots of links to pi activities

<http://www.mobot.org/education/megsl/pi.html> - and even more links

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Teacher Professional Development Workshops

The STEM team can bring professional development programs to your school or district. The aim is to improve the delivery of instruction as well as add to students' enjoyment of math and science. CPDU credits are available for teachers. The workshops will help enhance teachers subject matter knowledge and let them walk away with effective, hands on activities to use in their classrooms. Contact Karen Meyer at 708-449-4320 or meyerk@illinois.edu.

"Happy Birthday Galileo - Feb. 15, 1564"

Science & Technology Team:

Dr. Ajifolokun Oyewole
Extension Unit Educator,
Small Animal Health
aji@illinois.edu

Karen Meyer
Extension Unit Educator, Science & Technology (Math)
kmeyer@illinois.edu

Kenya Thomas
Extension Unit Educator, Science & Technology (Food Science)
krthoma1@illinois.edu

John Van Horn
Extension Unit Educator, Science (Physics)
jvanhorn@illinois.edu

Angel Edmond
Outreach Organizer/Mobile Science Lab Coordinator
edmond@illinois.edu

William Hamer
Mobile Science Lab Driver

On the Road & Busy

Science On The Go with the Mobile Science Lab is busy visiting schools throughout Cook County this spring. We currently have a waitlist for this school year. To request the Mobile Science Lab at your school for the 2009-10 school year or for teacher professional development, please visit our website at www.ScienceOnTheGo.uiuc.edu.

For more information, contact Angel Edmond at 708-449-4320 or edmond@illinois.edu



PHYSICAL SCIENCE CORNER- IYA 2009

CONTINUATION

Romans associated Venus with Aphrodite, their goddess of love. (However the Mayans considered Venus to be the patron planet of warfare called Kukulcan, or the feathered serpent.) Here are a few facts about Venus that you can use in class:

- Venus is one of two planets that show phases like the moon. In fact if your stu-

dents have access to binoculars they can see the phases easily.

- Venus can be so bright that in extremely dark areas, you can see your shadow just like you can with the sun and moon.
- Venus is one of the first objects observed by Galileo, who saw the phases in 1610.
- Venus is extremely hot; its

surface temperature is around 850° - 900° F. This makes Venus the second hottest object in the solar system, after the sun.

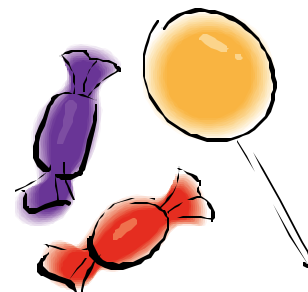
- Venus is our closest neighbor; it gets as close as 25 million miles.
- Venus rotates in the opposite direction of Earth; the sun rises in the West and sets in the East on Venus.

SCIENCE OF CANDYMAKING - FOR KIDS!

CONTINUATION

cacao bean. Students developed various final products including, lollipop suckers and even special made chocolates. Each student had an opportunity to make their own candy samples, box them up and take them home.

For the most part though the samples did not make it out the door!



PI DAY IS COMING! MARCH 14

CONTINUATION

If you have access to a computer in your classroom you may want to try this one.

Where is your birthday in Pi? Have students find out who is closest and farthest from the decimal point. To keep it

consistent everyone should enter their birthday in 6 digit format – no spaces. For example May 2, 1980 would be 050280.

Here is the site:
www.angio.net/pi/piquery

This site has 200 million digits of pi. The maximum number of

digits of pi necessary to find any month-day combination is 60872. See who in your class is the closest or farthest from the decimal point.

One more thing – not only is it Pi Day but it is also Albert Einstein's birthday. Take time to celebrate!



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